

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /086 W
-----011475 140558Z /10

R 132145Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8260
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 0371

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PLOS CI AR EC
SUBJ: ECUADOREAN ACCESS TO THE AMAZON

REF: (A) QUITO 0151; (B) QUITO 0188

1. DURING OUR MEETING JANUARY 10 THE FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD ME HE WAS COMPOSING A LENGTHY LETTER TO FOREIGN MINISTER AYALA ON THIS SUBJECT. DE LA PUENTE SAID THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO PERSUADE HIS COLLEAGUE IN QUITO THAT THE SCHEME TO EXCHANGE DIPLOMATIC NOTES AS A BASIS FOR DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE BORDER PROBLEM IS IMPRACTICABLE IN THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES. HE OBSERVED ONCE AGAIN THAT THIS GOE HAS A PROSPECTIVELY SHORT LIFE AND THAT THERE WOULD BE A RISK OF PERMANENT DAMAGE TO THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IF THE EXCHANGES BETWEEN THEM ON THIS SENSITIVE MATTER WERE TO BECOME THE OBJECT OF DEMAGOGIC TREATMENT IN THE ECUADOREAN POLITICAL CAMPAIGN. THE MINISTER DID REMARK, AS HE HAS BEFORE, ON HOW MUCH HE ADMIRES AND RESPECTS AYALA.

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2. ON THE CHILE-ARGENTINA DISPUTE DE LA PUENTE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT THE ARGENTINES WOULD MAKE A GREAT SHOW BUT THAT NO REAL FIGHTING WOULD OCCUR. HE ALSO THOUGHT A FIRM CHILEAN STAND WOULD FURTHER STRENGTHEN PINOCHET'S HAND, GIVEN WHAT HE RATHER ENVIOUSLY DESCRIBED AS THE HISTORICALLY INTENSE NATIONALISM OF THE CHILEAN PEOPLE.

3. COMMENT: DE LA PUENTE'S EXCUSES ARE SELF-SERVING BUT NOT ENTIRELY UNREASONABLE. THE PERUVIANS GENERALLY POINT TO VELASCO IBARRA'S PAST ORATORICAL EXCESSES AS A FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE FOR THE PROBLEM WITH ECUADOR. THE MINISTER WAS PROBABLY ALSO THINKING OF THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN HERE AND THE HAY THOSE POLITICIANS RUNNING AGAINST THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT (A GOODLY NUMBER ON BOTH THE LEFT AND RIGHT) COULD MAKE WITH THE ISSUE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. (THE GOP HAS ALREADY COME UNDER FIRE FOR ANOTHER KIND OF PURPORTED GIVE-AWAY IN THE GREENE-MERCADO AND MARCONA SETTLEMENTS.)

4. DE LA PUENTE'S VIEW THAT THE BEAGLE DISPUTE WILL BE NOISY BUT NON-VIOLENT APPEARS TO BE THE CONSENSUS JUDGMENT IN THE GOP. WE THINK THE ECUADOREANS CAN REST EASY. PERU'S ATTENTION WILL CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON CHILE.
SHLAUDEMAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INLAND WATERWAYS, NEGOTIATIONS, AMAZON
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LIMA00371
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780021-0885
Format: TEL
From: LIMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780166/aaaacdlk.tel
Line Count: 80
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7526fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 QUITO 151, 78 QUITO 188
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3778417
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECUADOREAN ACCESS TO THE AMAZON
TAGS: PLOS, PBOR, CI, AR, EC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7526fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014